

Washington, DC - This afternoon the House passed S. 352, the DTV Delay Act, which postpones the date of the analog-to-digital television transition from February 17, 2009, to June 12, 2009. The mandated delay in the transition will give consumers more time to get coupons to subsidize the purchase of digital TV converter boxes.

The Department of Commerce estimates that more than 2 million households are currently on a waiting list to receive coupons from the federal government.

Congressman Charlie Gonzalez (TX-20) issued the following statement applauding the delay of the transition date:

"The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's inaction and poor planning has unfortunately made this delay necessary; without it, millions of Americans could see their televisions go dark on February 18th. That is simply unacceptable, particularly because the transition date as it stands would disproportionately impact low-income, rural, and elderly Americans."

"The additional time will allow for the NTIA to be better prepared for the transition, specifically allowing them to deal with the backlog of coupon requests while similarly allowing retailers to address shortages in converter box inventory available for consumers. It is a necessary, onetime measure as demonstrated by its broad coalition of support, and I'm pleased to know that President Obama will soon sign this legislation into law."

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